



METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY

Arthur A. Mendonsa Hearing Room
112 East State Street

December 10, 2009

5:00 p.m.

Members

Tony Abbott
John Bennett
Tina Bennett
Daniel Brantley
Gerald Cook
Philip Cooper
Mark Egan
Phyllis Hardeman
Jason House
Charles Hutchinson
Chandler Kinsey
Beth Kinstler
Jack Knops
Henry Levy
Helen McCracken
Harris Odell
Dwayne Simpson
Linda M. Smith
Joe Steffen
Martin Sullivan
Dale Thorpe
Stephen Traub
Louis Wilson

Representing

Chatham County
City of Savannah
Port Wentworth
Chatham County
City of Bloomingdale
City of Savannah
Chatham County
Town of Thunderbolt
City of Savannah
City of Bloomingdale
City of Tybee Island
City of Savannah
City of Savannah
City of Tybee Island
Town of Thunderbolt
Chatham County
City of Savannah
Port Wentworth
Chatham County
Chatham County
Chatham County
City of Savannah
City of Savannah

Present

X
X

X

X

X
X
X

X

X
X
X

Others Present

Michael Adams
Jane Love
Barbara Settzo
Wykoda Wang
Mark Wilkes, P.E., AICP

Representing

MPO
MPO
for MPO
MPO
MPO

X
X
X
X
X

Prior to calling the meeting to order, MPC staff member, Julie Yawn, led an introductory training session on the new “e-agenda” software for conducting this and future committee meetings.

Chairman John Bennett called the December 10, 2009 Citizens Advisory Committee meeting to order, followed by self-introductions by committee members.

I. Approval of Agenda

It was moved and seconded to approve the agenda for the December 10, 2009 Citizens Advisory Committee meeting.

CAC Action: the motion to approve the agenda for the December 10, 2009 Citizens Advisory Committee meeting carried with none opposed.

II. Action Items

A. Approval of the October 15, 2009 Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Mr. Henry Levy moved and Ms. Beth Kinstler seconded the motion to approve the October 15, 2009 Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes.

CAC Action: the motion to approve the October 15, 2009 Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes carried with none opposed. There was one abstention.

B. Endorsement of the 2010 CORE MPO Meeting Schedule

Mr. Bennett read aloud the proposed schedule for this committee. Ms. Kinstler moved and Mr. Dwayne Simpson seconded the motion to endorse the 2010 CORE MPO Meeting Schedule as presented.

There was no discussion.

CAC Action: the motion to endorse the 2010 CORE MPO Meeting Schedule as presented carried with none opposed.

III. Status Reports

A. Project DeRenne Update

Ms. Jane Love offered a description of the alternatives that came from the Project DeRenne charrette, which had been organized by the City of Savannah in early November. These alternatives will be taken to the city council in February. The two alternatives are:

- Intersection improvements option – create additional east-bound land which terminates as a right-turn-only lane at White Bluff Rd; create pedestrian refuge islands
- Boulevard option – transforms the current Hampstead Ave. into “Poplar Place Boulevard,” which provides continuous travel (without turn delays) between I-516 and southern portion of White Bluff Rd. Hunter Army Airfield access would be directly onto this new roadway. This new roadway would be designed with sidewalks, planted buffers, and planted median. The northern portion of White Bluff Rd. would curve slightly westward to intersect the new boulevard at a right angle as the boulevard curves continuously into the southern portion of White Bluff Rd.

Discussion followed. Concerns were expressed about the impact of this plan on commercial property owners, funding for the project, the acquisition of land from the army, and traffic counts. Ms. Love assured the committee that several business owners and property owners in the area had participated in the charrette and in previous stakeholder meetings. There had been a specific focus group meeting about economic impacts during the charrette. Hunter Army Airfield representatives also have been involved in the discussion, and it is too early to say whether it's truly impossible to obtain land from the Army for the curve of I-516 into the new boulevard. Decisions on funding the projects would come later; City Council has not yet chosen any particular alternative for moving forward.

Ms. Love added that the boulevard proposal also includes improvements on DeRenne Ave., east of Abercorn St., for bicyclists and pedestrians. These include facilities on the parallel, residential DeRenne Drive as well as landscaped medians with strategic left-turn opportunities.

Ms. Kinstler commented that she saw no ride-share information on the websites of the Candler and Memorial. Ms. Love explained that the hospitals have Intra-net sites for their employees to find carpool partners, and thus the public would not be aware of this activity. She said that the hospitals also informed their employees of the MPO's Coastal Commuters ride-matching system, but she acknowledged that only a few hospital employees are currently registered in that system. It is more popular with employees in other sectors.

Mr. Wilkes explained that Project DeRenne has been a very public process coordinated by the City of Savannah. No action will be necessary by the MPO until the city approves a plan for DeRenne. If any plan should require federal funding, then some aspect of the project would come back to the MPO. Ms. Love noted that the Citizens Advisory Committee has not taken a formal position on Project DeRenne. She referred all committee members to the website for Project DeRenne. The MPO is not in charge of this project; this is a city project. Mr. Bennett asked the MPO staff to keep this committee current on the progress of Project DeRenne. Ms. Love agreed and noted that city staff or consultants would be presenting to the CORE MPO Board meeting next week and that meeting will be televised as usual.

IV. Agency Reports - nothing at this time

V. **Other Business**

Ms. Wykoda Wang reported that GDOT approved funding for Truman Parkway Phase V. This project will be let in January 2010.

VI. **Other Public Comments** - no public comments at this time.

VII. **Adjournment**

There being no other business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned. The next meeting will be February 18, 2010, pending approval of the schedule by the CORE MPO Board.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Love
Transportation Planner